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Flying Service And CIA Deny Relationship

By ERNIE HELTSLEY
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The Central Intelligence Agency and Intermountain Aviation, Inc., both denied yesterday that the Marana Air Park-based flight service firm is an arm of the CIA in disguise — as a top law enforcement official has reported.

The official made the statement, with a request for anonymity, during questioning concerning the clouded circumstances of the crash of a 1969 Beechcraft S-32 near homes in a fashionable northwest Tucson neighborhood on Tuesday. The pilot and a passenger were killed.

"We don't engage in intelligence operations inside the continental U.S. — that's a function of the FBI," said a spokesman for CIA Director Richard Helms in Washington, D.C.

Jack Scanlon, personnel director for Intermountain, labled the police report "ridiculous" but said his commercial firm has had a number of contracts with federal agencies during its nine years at Marana.

Scanlon said the only classified project going on at Marana is the Air Force contract operation carried out by Univac Division of Sperry Rand Corp. Three other planes like the one that crashed are at the Marana facility.

"We're continually bidding on various types of contracts, and I'd hate to see anything to upset it. Rumors like this put us in a hell of a bind," said Scanlon.

Until yesterday, Univac withheld information about the mission of the ill-fated flight. Then, Capt. Ray Quillan, a Pentagon spokesman, said the craft was specially built for lease to Univac which was to run a 300-hour test of a new type of aircraft engine.

Quillan said the nature and specifications of the small craft are classified.

The CIA spokesman said he had "not even heard of Intermountain," and that the Tucson law enforcement source "would have to be guessing" because the agency reports only to the President and the Congress.

Scanlon said Intermountain leases Marana Air Park from Pinal County and subleases half of a hangar to Univac. The U.S. Forestry Ser-

vise also uses some space for firefighting training and a fire control center.

He said the bulk of the firm's business during the summer is in transporting smoke jumpers and giving other support for fighting fires in the northwest and southwest. During the last two years, Scanlon said, Intermountain has hauled small oil equipment for companies developing Alaska's oil boom.